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Italian Intrigue Involves Arms Smuggling

By GEORGE WELLER

ROME — (CDN) — Italy's police, frustrated in their probe of two violent political deaths, have found fresh hope in the suddenly changed alibi of Klaus Barbie, accused Nazi war criminal.

After five months of denials and border-jumping, Altman confessed in Bolivia that in wartime France he "used the alias Klaus Barbie." France's President Georges Pompidou has asked Bolivia to surrender Barbie-Altman for alleged killings of Parisians and Jewish children in Lyons, where he was S.S. chief Klaus Barbie.

Italy's police need the testimony of the Nazi fugitive to clear up the deaths of millionaire publisher Giacomo Feltrinelli and Milan police chief Luigi Calabresi. (Three Bolivian witnesses already have been assassinated in the Nazi case.)

The common factor in the operations of Barbie-Altman, the dead Maoist publisher, and the murdered police chief is that they apparently were all involved in clandestine Arab and Israeli arms traffic to the Middle East.

WESTERN European countries generally embargo arms for both sides. Switzerland is the illegal market.

Barbie-Altman was the front man for the Bolivian government purchase in Switzerland of arms actually intended for Israel, according to testimony by Teddy Cordova Claver, a former secretary to ex-president Gen. Juan Jose Torres. By working for Israel, Claver says, Barbie-Altman defended himself against extradition from Bolivia, either to France, which demanded it, or to Israel, which did not.

The Maoist publisher Feltrinelli, according to the Italian police, after visiting Bolivia, toured the Middle East with his female secretary, making contacts with Palestinian underground guerrillas. He was trailed by Israeli intelligence, and may have been contacted by them. His operations suggest that he was either outwitted by the

Israelis or became a double agent.

Feltrinelli arranged for an arms deal through Switzerland for the benefit of the Palestinians, Milan police discovered.

THE DEAL went through, financed by the wealthy owner of an Italian football team, Giuseppe Pasquale, Feltrinelli's ex-partner in cinema ventures.

Feltrinelli then cooked up a bigger deal of arms, supposedly again for the Palestinians, worth a million dollars. Pasquale borrowed the money from a Swiss bank, eager for a bigger killing.

But it was a trap. On this second try, last year, the entire shipment of arms — according to the Italian police — was intercepted at sea by the Israeli navy off Algeria.

Pasquale begged Feltrinelli — a much richer man — to bail him out. The publisher refused.

So Feltrinelli was in the position of having engineered a giant arms deal for Arabs that ended in Israeli hands.

Pasquale went bankrupt and was arrested. At his own pica "for protection" the police now keep him in a special hospital.

Feltrinelli's body was found outside Milan, by a power pylon, with his leg blown off by dynamite and several undischarged sticks nearby. His death may have been accidental or he may have paid for his involvement in the arms deal, revealed only this week.

CALABRESI, brilliant 34-year-old police chief, was working on the Feltrinelli case when shot down by a blond gunman before his home last week.

It was he who had recognized Feltrinelli's dismembered body. "Put a moustache on it," he said, when other detectives doubted the identification.

It was Calabresi who, digging into the publisher's arms deals, found his hideout, with his passport — in a garage. The garage was fitted with a cell and guerrilla guardroom for holding ransom victims. Fiat executives topped the list. For five months Calabresi, a personable university graduate, had been searching for Feltrinelli's missing secretary, the blonde Monica Hertl. It was Monica to whom German police traced a .38 caliber revolver that killed another police chief, a Bolivian, in Hamburg last winter.

THE VICTIM of that shooting was Roberto Quintanilla, who had been ordered to return to Bolivia to testify about Barbie-Altman's

alleged Israeli arms deal. He was chief of police underex-president Gen. Rene Barrientos, Barbie-Altman's patron. "His death," remarked the guardian, "was amazingly convenient to those trying to cover their tracks with regard to the arms for Israel."

A woman's sunglasses were found in the escape car used by the killer of the Milan chief. Was Monica Hertl the woman driver?

Barbie-Altman was traced as being in Hamburg the day when the Bolivian police chief was killed.

But when Calabresi was murdered on his doorstep, the Nazi was back in Bolivia, denying he was the Klaus Barbie France demanded.

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